

FY-1974

ANNUAL REPORT

MICROFILM PROGRAMS BRANCH

Section A - General

STAT 1. The mission of the Microfilm Programs Branch (MPB) -- to oversee the Agency's micrographic activities to bring about a greater utilization of microforms to improve the economy and effectiveness of information handling and data storage and retrieval -- was formalized with the publication of [] in February 1974. Lack of a charter for the first six months of the year, however, did not seriously affect MPB's ability to gain the cooperation of all Directorates in fulfilling its coordinating responsibilities.

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3. The campaign mounted by MPB to acquaint more Agency personnel with micrographics technology was highlighted in the formulation and running of a two-day seminar in March. The response was so enthusiastic that four additional such seminars are planned for FY-1975.

4. Thus the concerted efforts of MPB to stimulate new interest across the Agency in an old technology coupled with the added incentives inuring because of the paper crunch have had a dramatic effect on the work load of the Agency's central processing facilities. This raises a question as to how long these facilities will be able to continue functioning before being forced to close their doors to new applications. If this occurs, components will naturally look toward other alternatives and the cycle of costly proliferation of both cameras and processing equipment will repeat itself.

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Section B - Performance Against FY-74 ObjectivesOBJECTIVE #1: Publication of Technical Standards...

Standards on utilization of microfilm jackets, flowchart symbols, and a glossary of terms as well as other technical information were published during the year. Publication of such information in standards is intended to ensure compatibility of micrographics activities throughout the Agency. Such rules and guidelines will henceforth be incorporated into an Agency Micrographics Handbook which is planned for FY-1975. In addition, Agency policy was developed for the deposit in Archives of the master silver negative of microfilm as the Archival copy and the use of an additional silver duplicate as the reference copy. Selection of the Data-Pax storage container for microfiche to be used in the Records Center will facilitate both the transfer to and storage of microfiche in the Records Center. A microfiche viewer guide, developed by a former member of MPB, was adopted for use on Agency microfiche viewers.

OBJECTIVE #2: Shift Current Emphasis from Technology to Systems Analysis...

1. A display of micrographics equipment set up for purpose of stimulating interest in micrographics and to offer components an opportunity to try equipment before they buy it continued to provide a basis for significant savings to the Agency. Throughout the year numerous components borrowed MPB's equipment to satisfy themselves that the equipment indeed met their requirements and in other cases based on such evaluation the components selected alternative equipment.

2. Efforts to stimulate the greater use of Computer Output Microfilm (COM) were undertaken as part of an Agency-wide paper conservation campaign. Voluminous computer listings were reviewed and an experimental program was begun to convert certain Office of Personnel reports to microfiche. MPB discussed with OJCS other ways and means to exploit the paper saving potential of COM by suggesting that programmers take computer core dumps on film rather than paper and that systems analysts might cite microfilm as an alternative to paper in designing computer systems. Working with the Office of Finance, the Payroll COM application was successfully converted from microfilm cartridges to microfiche. This conversion made it possible to distribute the complete payroll on fiche to each analyst thereby eliminating queues at the viewer-printers

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that were previously used in the cartridge operation, reduced major costs involved in stuffing and stripping the film from cartridges every two weeks, and eliminated the need for producing from the microfilm record a significant number of paper copies of an employee's pay record for analytical purposes. As a peripheral suggestion MPB noted to OF that a relandscaping of the office work environment would now be possible with the advent of this new micrographics application. The DDM&S supported the proposal by funding the plan to redesign the analyst work stations and to make the Payroll operation a model for Agency office landscaping in the Rosslyn area.

3. At MPB's recommendation, the DD/M&S approved the relocation of the Agency's COM recorder from OJCS to the Printing Services Division of OL, thus colocating the COM device with other central micrographics facilities.

4. MPB, running undermanned for the greater portion of the year, finally reached a full complement in May 1974. Since the professional staff had little exposure to micrographics prior to FY-1974, their orientation and training were important objectives for the Branch. The officers received intensive training in the micrographics field attending a total of 16 seminars, the Mid-Winter and Annual National Microfilm Association Conventions, 18 briefings on various pieces of micrographics equipment and techniques, and various other equipment demonstrations within the industry and other government agencies alike. The Staff also visited most of the Agency components involved in major microfilm programs. Members of the Branch also attended such other Agency training courses as the DDM&S Trends and Highlights, EDP Orientation, and GIM For Users. The Branch secretary attended the Introduction to Micrographics Seminar.

5. At the behest of MPB the Office of Logistics conducted an Agency-wide inventory of microfilm applications and equipment. The inventory was incorporated into a data base which is now computer processed in an online system. This gives MPB a quick and efficient way to maintain a current Agency-wide inventory and permits queries of the data on a number of aspects of interest to management.

6. Following MPB's recommendation, the Office of Logistics procured 200 WSI Minicat dual lens microfiche viewers for stock. The viewers had previously been evaluated by various Agency components prior to MPB's recommendation to OL that they be included in the stock system.

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OBJECTIVE #3: Establish Temporary Area...

1. The objective to relocate the Branch at Headquarters was not met due to unavailability of space in the Headquarters Building. The continued separation of the Branch from Headquarters has resulted not only in valuable time lost in commuting to and from the many components seeking MPB's guidance and assistance, but also more importantly in the interference it has caused in developing a more dynamic exchange of information and ideas. However, MPB's location in Rosslyn has permitted easier access to vendors.

2. MPB reviewed Agency contracts for the servicing of micrographic equipment, and for ad hoc service calls. The survey revealed that minimal funds are expended on such maintenance. MPB recommended, however, that certain specific component contracts for such maintenance be dropped and that the components obtain service on their equipment under the terms of blanket Agency contracts.

3. A total of 64 requisitions for microfilm equipment and supplies were reviewed and approved.

Section C - Other FY-74 Activities

1. MPB's coordination efforts extended beyond the Agency as time permitted. A representative of the Federal Energy Office exploring micrographics as a potential solution to the incipient paper problem consulted with MPB which resulted in the FEO using the COM facilities at NOAA rather than contracting the work out to a local commercial service bureau. NSA's newly formed Agency microfilm component also sought MPB's guidance and recommendations on how to manage an agency-wide micrographics program.

2. MPB also represented the Agency in helping to form a Federal Government Micrographics Council under sponsorship of NARS to foster more effective management of government micrographic operations at less cost. The Council will serve as a communications forum for the exchange of micrographics information on systems, procedures, hardware, software, etc. among the representatives from all branches of the federal government.

Section D - Recommendations

1. MPB hopes to promote the acquisition of and use in the Agency of a graphics COM recorder. Such a capability would permit

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graphing of financial reports for the Comptroller (Trend Reports) and of other administrative data of interest to Agency management, scientific and cartographic plots, high speed photocomposition work, as well as the classical alphanumeric data converting to microform. We believe a recorder of this type could have wide application across all Directorates of the Agency.

2. An updatable microfiche system, the result of a three year development effort by DDS&T/OTS, has been delivered to MPB for evaluation and exploitation. MPB plans to demonstrate this system to specific Agency components and then select a suitable application which will fully test the potential of the system.

3. Where possible MPB will strive to develop uniform procedures for the costing of micrographic applications.

4. On a time available basis MPB also plans to outline a scenario which will be used in the production of a 10-15 minute color movie or video tape presentation on the "CIA Micrographics Story." This film then would become a useful briefing and training aid which would serve to highlight the diverse and pervasive nature of the Agency's micrographics program.

5. One problem looms large on the horizon as the staff of MPB hits professional stride. Simply stated, the limited staff of the Agency's central microphotographic facility in PSD will soon be unable to keep up with the burgeoning workload brought on by MPB's campaign to educate and stimulate across the Agency a greater utilization of microforms to bring about more effective and efficient information handling. At a point in the not too distant future it appears there will be a sufficient backlog of work in the central facility which will undoubtedly necessitate MPB's restraining its program unless, of course, more personnel are devoted to this effort. Additional resources dedicated to this vital activity will redound to the benefit of the entire Agency as micrographics clearly helps all do more with less!

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[Redacted]
Chief, Microfilm Programs Branch

ISAS/MPB, [Redacted] (3 Jul 74)

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